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LETTER DATED 16 JULY 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF INDONESIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Indonesia has taken careful note of an assessment provided to the Security Council regarding the security conditions in East Timor, that "violence and intimidation have continued to be carried out with impunity by pro-autonomy militias" (S/1999/786). This assessment depicts an imbalanced picture, and Indonesia is obliged to share with you the prevailing realities.

I should therefore like to draw your attention to some recent facts which I hope will assist the Security Council in having a more complete appreciation of the true situation on the ground. In one case, a person from Diosa village, Bobonaro district, named Hornando Gobya Late, was kidnapped on 11 July 1999 by about 30 armed men belonging to the anti-autonomy group. Regrettably, his whereabouts remain unknown. In yet another case, two people by the name of Marcelino Babo and Mario of the Wurahu village, Emera district, were kidnapped on 12 July by about nine armed people from the anti-autonomy group, and are still missing. Meanwhile, on 13 July 1999, the authorities discovered the decomposed body of a pro-autonomy individual named Dominggus in an area located between the subdistricts of Barique and Turiscai. During that period, approximately 20 armed men from the anti-autonomy group were reported to be operating in the vicinity.

Indonesia's close monitoring of these activities are a reflection of its firm commitment to implement in letter and spirit the 5 May 1999 agreements. Furthermore, in line with its pronouncement that it would bring the perpetrators to justice, regardless of which group they belonged to, the Indonesian police have detained members of the pro-autonomy group for their respective roles in the incidents that took place in Liquica on 3 and 4 July 1999. This prompt action was taken while further information is being sought from witnesses. In addition, as recently acknowledged by the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET), the Indonesian police acted swiftly to prevent an incident in Maliana on 13 July 1999, when a group of people attempted to enter the UNAMET residence.

It is, therefore, more accurate to describe these few incidents, as well as those that have been reported to the Security Council, as having been caused by some differences in viewpoints between the pro-autonomy and anti-autonomy groups.

Hence, it is Indonesia's sincere hope that the review of the security situation in East Timor will fully take into account the prevailing realities on the ground, including the Government's sincere efforts to fulfil its obligations with regard to security, and thereby assure a more peaceful and tranquil environment for the holding of the popular consultation.

It will be greatly appreciated if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Makarim WIBISONO
Ambassador
Permanent Representative